## CITIZENS ADVICE SCOTLAND

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### JOB DETAILS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Job Title | Information Officer (Campaigns and Public Understanding) |
| Section | Information  |
| Location | Spectrum House (CAS main office) |
| Reports To | Head of Information and Service Communications |
| Work Pattern | Part time |
| Status | Permanent contract |
| Date | November 2014 |

### BACKGROUND

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| General | Citizens Advice Scotland, alongside our partner organisations publish, maintain, update and archive two advice websites. These are **AdviserNet**, the internal advice website used by CAB advisers, and **Adviceguide**, the advice website available to the public at [www.adviceguide.org.uk/scotland](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/scotland). Both AdviserNet and Adviceguide are updated on a daily basis. |

### JOB PURPOSE

|  |
| --- |
| The purpose of the Information Officer role is to ensure that AdviserNet and Adviceguide, which are UK wide resources, are fully effective for Scottish citizens and also to provide a support service to bureaux advisers. This post will also interact with the Policy and Public Affairs team, in order to ensure the two information systems link effectively and are updated in light of relevant policy and campaigning work. |

### KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To work closely with CAS Policy and Public Affairs team to plan and implement information developments to support public campaigns and contribute to public understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
2. To write clear, accurate, up to date, relevant and practical materials for use by advisers in bureaux and for use by the public.
3. To support Scottish bureaux and other AdviserNet users through the provision of a consultancy service to Scottish CAB, external AdviserNet subscribers and members of the public using Adviceguide.
4. To make use of feedback gathered – through consultancy and through a range of pro-active steps, including bureau visits – to contribute to improving and developing the effectiveness of information for advisers, relevant stakeholders and the public.
5. To research and write reports, updates, planning documents and, from time to time, strategy papers for the CAS Board, the Policy Forum and any other relevant groups.
6. To undertake development work relating to AdviserNet and/or Adviceguide including developing new content formats/conventions and planning/managing changes in publishing technology.
7. Provide assessments, including, where appropriate, detailed commentary on the suitability for Scottish citizens of information produced by outside agencies in both Scotland and the UK.
8. Work with other CAS sections in particular the Policy and Public Affairs team to influence the development of social policy by identifying issues of common concern and undertaking work jointly.
9. To undertake work relating to the general needs of the Information Section, including one or more of the following: managing the Information Administrator, chairing meetings, developing new internal processes, developing and implementing new ways of engaging with users, writing presentations for outside agencies/CAB staff and volunteers, co-ordinating/chairing conference workshops, representing CAS on a range of external bodies, managing small development projects, promoting use/sales of AdviserNet, and assisting the Head of Information and Service Communications with financial planning and monitoring.
10. Deputise for the Head of Information and Service Communications as required.
11. To assist the Information Section in delivering the CAS corporate goals.
12. To undertake any other duties as appropriate, as required by the Head of Information. and Service Communications.

### AUTHORITIES AND LIMITATIONS

1. Agree an action plan for writing work with colleagues at CAS and Citizens Advice (EW).
2. Finalise content for AdviserNet and Adviceguide.
3. Exercise judgement to use or set aside an outside checker’s comments, with input from peers and/or Head of Information and Service Communications as required.
4. Resolve difficulties in queries from bureau workers, the public, external subscribers and other users of the information systems.
5. Liaise on agreed tasks with outside organizations when there are no budget or substantial resource implications.
6. Liaise with operational staff and/or management at Citizens Advice (EW) under the overall direction of the Head of Information and Service Communications.
7. Attend conferences and contribute on the content if studied for the purposes of writing information.
8. Liaise with civil servants and other policy experts to assess the impact on information content and/or highlight issues or difficulties with proposed changes to law or guidance.
9. Identify and approach suitable expert checkers in a timely way.
10. Determine the best publishing date for new/amended content to go onto the online version of AdviserNet.

### PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Determine what to write for both information systems and make decisions about scope and level of detail with minimal (if any) input from Head of Information and Service Communications.
2. Prioritise workload – decisions may have to be made on a daily basis because of flow of work from Citizens Advice (England and Wales).
3. Identify and resolve ‘suitability for Scotland’ issues in draft work from Citizens Advice (England and Wales).
4. Initiate new research for writing projects based on analysing bureau feedback, expert checker feedback and team review.
5. Initiate research and implement design of new and/or improved content formats/conventions.
6. Contribute to amending team processes when an existing way of working can be improved or has caused problems.
7. Build effective relationships colleagues at Citizens Advice (England and Wales), Scottish Government and other organizations to ensure timely and reliable checking / feedback of content as required.
8. Decide whether tactical advice is needed based on sources such as expert summaries, bureau feedback and case law.
9. Analyse the impact of amendments to existing content, ensuring logical navigation and coherence is maintained.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Essential

1. Educated to degree level or equivalent.
2. Skills to regularly produce writing that communicates complex information clearly, accurately and accessibly for both a specialist and generalist audience.
3. Strong analytical skills – the ability to research, assimilate and organise complex information, including primary and secondary legislation, quickly and effectively.
4. Proven capacity to work with accuracy and attention to detail under the pressure of deadlines.
5. Ability to demonstrate a good knowledge of Scottish parliamentary processes and a good understanding of the devolved areas of Scottish law.
6. Ability to work on own initiative, organising and prioritising workload to meet agreed targets.
7. Ability to work as part of a team, contributing to the overall goals of the section.
8. Flexibility to be willing and able to take on a range of tasks shared across the team.
9. Ability to use standard software packages such as Word, Excel, Outlook, and willingness to learn new IT skills, including content management systems for web publishing.
10. Commitment to the equal opportunities policy of the Association.
11. Commitment to, and understanding of, the Aims of the Association.
12. Commitment to working as part of a team.
13. Ability to attend occasional meetings in London involving overnight stays.

### Desirable

1. Knowledge and understanding of law and practice as it affects clients of Citizens Advice Bureaux, other agencies and the public.
2. Experience of work within the voluntary sector – preferably in social welfare or advice work – either as a volunteer, paid staff or committee member.
3. Experience of working with budgets and/or staff supervision and/or small project management.